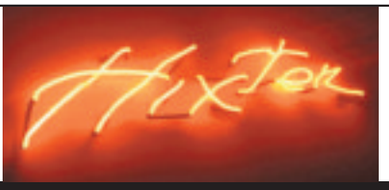
LWN LONDON WEEKLY NEWS GROUP

Chelsea NEWS

First established 1857 PICK UP A FREE COPY Thursday, November 27th 2014

Win lunch for two at top chef Mark Hix's cool new restaurant *-see page 19*



WIN tickets to skate at Harry Styles's favourite rink
Competition on page 21

DON'T MISS MARK'S RECIPE OF THE WEEK – *see page 19*

People power protest over the mansion tax

KENSINGTON and Chelsea council leader Nick Paget-Brown is calling on residents to join 'a people's movement' to stop the retired and elderly being forced from their homes by the threatened Mansion Tax.

He is leading a drive to raise an army of objectors to pressure Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls to drop the proposal which has left residents frightened and alarmed.

Cllr Paget-Brown (pictured) is urging residents to sign up to Stop The Mansion Tax, a new online protest campaign which can be joined by emailing stopmansiontaxca@aol.com

"This is a people's movement," he said. "If we are going to stop the tax, the campaign has to be less about the politics of the Mansion Tax and more about the real people who will end up paying it."

The gearing up of the protest movement comes after research has revealed that the mansion tax threatens many more home-owners than was first thought.

A study by Knight Frank's global head of residential research Liam Bailey shows that 37,400 homes in London currently fall into the £2 million-plus bracket which would make them liable for the tax. Of these, 11,955 are in the borough of Kensington & Chelsea and 8,119 in the City of Westminster.

However, the Knight Frank research reveals that without indexation hundreds of thousands of London homes would be hit by the tax in coming years.

Over the past 10 years, house prices have risen by 69 per cent. The Knight Frank study says: "Assuming a similar rate of growth in the future, all houses worth £1,185,000 today would be paying a mansion tax 10 years from now."

That would almost triple the number of London houses caught by the threshold to 107,080.

Over the next 25 years – the term of an average mortgage – houses worth £540,000 today would become mansion-taxed, affecting 527,910 homes in London.

Cllr Paget-Brown has claimed that the controversial Labour plan would "destroy" retirements for up to 7,000 homeowners in the royal borough and would drive many to sell up and move to cheaper places to live.

Although Mr Balls says his Mansion Tax proposal is aimed at oligarchs and billionaires, Cllr Paget-Brown says it would hit ordinary elderly people the hardest and lay waste to their plans for the last years of their lives.

Cllr Paget-Brown said: "I suspect Ed Balls knows perfectly well that the people who will end up paying his tax aren't billionaires, or from overseas, or even buyers; they will actually be long-term members of our community.

"Older and often retired, they will have bought their homes decades ago for a fraction of what they are worth today. They will simply not be able to afford the tax and will face a terrible choice: move away, or allow the tax to rack up as a sort of huge additional death duty.'

"Many residents of Kensington and Chelsea are now in a state of very great fear and worry about the mansion tax proposals.

■ CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

● By LWN reporter **GEOFF BAKER**

geoff baker@londonweeklynews.co.uk

■ **THE Chelsea Theatre Group were among the organisations creating a festive atmosphere at the turning on of the Portobello Market Christmas lights.** *Photo feature on pages 6 & 7*

INSIDE YOUR NEW COMMUNITY PAPER

West London's latest singing sensation - *page 20*

Mayor honours the best bar in town - page 20

Don't miss the Great Christmas Pudding Race in Covent Garden *See page 21*

Plans for Chelsea Crossrail 2 station still on track

PLANS for a Crossrail 2 station in the heart of Chelsea remain on track following an announcement by the Department for Transport (DfT) on its latest safeguarded route.

The DfT has published revised plans which indicate that it agrees with the Royal Borough that Crossrail 2 should serve Chelsea with a stop on King's Road. These safeguarding proposals ensure that development is not approved that would compromise future construction.

"We very much welcome this announcement as one of the strongest indicators yet that the DfT agrees that a station on King's Road, near the fire station, is the right option not only for the Royal Borough, but the capital," said Cllr Tim Coleridge, Cabinet Member for Transport.

"The station will bring around 5,500 homes within a ten minute walk of the Underground for the first time, helping to reduce traffic congestion and poor air quality.

"For some Chelsea residents this news will be met with some trepidation about the impact of construction. I want to reassure them that as TfL develops its plans for the station and the line, the council will press very hard to ensure the least disruptive possible method is chosen."

TfL and Network Rail plan to start construction on the line in 2020, with it opening in 2030.

DfT will be consulting on the new safeguarded route in 2015 and more information is available at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/crossrail-2-safeguarding-directions.

You can also contact the Crossrail 2 safeguarding team at:safeguardcrossrail2@tfl.gov.uk, call 0343 222 1234 or write to Crossrail 2 Safeguarding, Transport for London, 9th Floor Windsor House, 42-50 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0TL.

We must value the countryside

HRH the Prince of Wales has said that it's imperative to value what the countryside provides and support the people who live and work in the countryside to make it thrive.

The Prince of Wales, writing in Country Life, said: "The rich, natural tapestry that is the countryside we value so highly does not just happen by itself. But that delicately woven tapestry is facing unprecedented challenges.

"Start pulling out the threads and the rest unravels very rapidly indeed, and is very difficult to put back again - no farmers, no beautiful landscapes with hedgerows and stone walls; no thriving rural communities, no villages - or village pubs; no local markets, no distinctive local foods. Somehow, we need to find a way to put a value on our countryside, with all its facets."

The Prince's Countryside Fund, founded by HRH The Prince of Wales, who has a long-held commitment to supporting Britain's hard pressed rural areas, was set up by Business in the Community in July 2010. With support from businesses and donations from the public the fund has been able to invest £4.4 million by providing grants that have directly benefitted 80,000 people living and working in our rural communities in greatest need.

Helen Aldis, Manager of The Prince's Countryside Fund, said: "Our work to support and sustain rural communities would not be possible without the generous contributions of our supporting companies and individuals alike.

"In addition to contributing to the funding of 105 projects across the UK to date, the quick and generous reaction to the plight of the farmers and communities hit by the devastating floods in early 2014 is a testament to how businesses and communities can work together in times of crisis. However, we must continue to invest in supporting the people who care for the countryside to ensure it flourishes and survives for future generations".

About The Prince's Countryside Fund

THE Prince's Countryside Fund, founded by HRH The Prince of Wales, who has a long-held commitment to supporting Britain's hard pressed rural areas, was set up by Business in the Community in July 2010.

So far it has given £4.4 million in grants distributed to 105 projects across the country, directly benefitting 80,000 people. Projects that have been funded range from apprenticeships for budding hill farmers, training for young people to gain employment in the rural economy, community transport schemes in isolated rural areas and projects to educate school children about where their food comes from and why the countryside matters.

In addition to its normal application process, the Fund also operates an emergency fund for times of need. All the projects focus on supporting the people who care for our countryside and make it tick.

The companies that support the Fund are: Asda, Aquascot, Barbour, Barclays, Booths, Coutts, Dairy Crest, Dalehead Foods, Dovecote Park, Duchy Original, Ginsters, HSBC, Hunter, Jordans & Ryvita, Kerry Foods, Land Rover, Lloyds, Marks & Spencer, Moy Park, Musto, United Biscuits and Waitrose.

Tindle Newspapers supports The Prince's Countryside Fund

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(Established 1857)
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Business News

Our business enewsletter is sent out monthly and keeps you up-to-date with:

- Special offers and discounts for businesses
- Advice for SMEs and start-ups
- Events and training opportunities
- Ways to help support the community and develop your CSR policy
- Commercial services available to businesses.

In the November 2014 edition: Prepare for NYE fireworks / Meet the buyers and pitch for new business / Regent Street road closures

Kensington & Chelsea

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accessible.transport@rbkc.gov.uk
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Housing
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housing@rbkc.gov.uk
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parking@rbkc.gov.uk
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020 7361 4383
parking@rbkc.gov.uk
Parking - permit (new applications)
020 7361 4381
residentparking@rbkc.gov.uk
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020 7361 3019
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streetline@rbkc.gov.uk
Social Services
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socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk

Tell Us Once
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Welcome to your new community newspaper

IT'S good news week for Central London with the launch of four new newspapers in the capital's most vibrant communities.

The newspapers, which include the Chelsea News, first established in1857, are being published by Capital News and Media Limited, a subsidiary of the Tindle Newspaper Group.

Tindle Newspapers is the biggest publisher of independently owned newspapers in the United Kingdom with more than 200 titles, 28 in Greater London including the flagship South London Press.

The Chelsea News will have three sister titles - the Kensington News (established 1869), the Westminster and Pimlico News (established 1857) and a new title, the London Weekly News for residents and visitors with royal and celebrity news and distributed in and around London's main tourist attractions.

For regional press champion Sir Ray Tindle it's a welcome return to publishing in Central London, having owned the Kensington News, Chelsea News and Westminster and Pimlico News in the past.

Due to the difficult financial climate in recent years, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the City of Westminster have been left without their dedicated weekly newspaper.

Tindle Newspapers has bucked the trend and, in the last few years, has acquired or opened no less than 43 new titles.

We believe passionately in the future of local newspapers and we are proud to be able to return these titles to Central London where we will be concentrating on reporting community events and recording the achievements of those who live and work in these important London areas.

Philip Evans (Editor)

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PHOTO SPREAD INSIDE

INSIDE YOUR NEW COMMUNITY PAPER

Plans for Chelsea Crossrail 2 station still on track

THE paper serving the HEART of London

■ **SILENT TRIBUTE: Four towers of ceramic poppies symbolising four years of the Great War**

Chelsea Pensioners create their own poppy memorial

THE Chelsea Pensioners have unveiled their very own ceramic poppy display to commemorate the centenary of the Great War.

While not on the scale of the Tower of London's iconic display, the 25 ceramic pots forming four towers commemorate remembrance in the Pensioners' own unique way.

Thirty-five Chelsea Pensioners from the Royal Hospital's care home with nursing, the Margaret Thatcher Infirmary, have been working on the display since September.

Every ceramic pot has its own unique design, giving each a very personal touch; from vivid red poppies to interpretations of iconic images from the front, such as an armed soldier walking across No Man's Land.

The four towers symbolise the four years of the Great War.

Royal Hospital Chelsea pottery teacher Emily Hall said: "I am so proud to work with the Chelsea Pensioners. They are such inspiring people and this project has really bought everyone together to create a special mark of remembrance in this centenary year.

"Hopefully it will be a place for people to reflect and honour the great sacrifice made and show that we will never forget."

New bobbies on the beat in Chelsea

First of three new community policing teams take to the streets

THE first police officers of the newly formed Kensington and Chelsea Community Policing Team paid for by an annual £1.4 million investment by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea are on their new beat.

Two further teams will start work at the beginning of January 2015.

By March 2015 the full strength Kensington and Chelsea Community Policing Team will comprise 36 constables, four sergeants and an inspector.

In addition to providing high-visibility patrols and dealing with anti-social behaviour, licensing and crime prevention, officers will also tackle longstanding resident concerns like graffiti, vice cards, begging, dog fouling, litter and illegal street trading.

In a new approach to policing the team will be jointly run by the council and police.

Greeting the first police officers, Cllr Joanna Gardner, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, IT and Corporate Services, said: "I am delighted to be able to welcome our first officers. This is an exciting phase in our long term partnership with the police and represents a very hands-on approach to working together to keep the streets of Kensington and Chelsea safe.

"The new team will be able to respond to some of those local issues which are not usually a priority for police, but regularly concern our residents and affect the quality of their lives."

Kensington and Chelsea Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Ellie O'Connor, said: "I am delighted that the council has invested so heavily in providing extra police officers for the Royal Borough.

■ **SAFER STREETS: Councillors Nicholas Paget-Brown and Joanna Gardner welcome the new Community Policing Team**

"These teams will provide additional officers who will be able to tackle quality of life issues and provide a highly visible presence on the streets of Kensington and Chelsea.

"It is testament to the determination of the Metropolitan Police Service and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to work in partnership to improve the quality of life of residents, businesses and visitors to the borough."

Mansion tax will 'force some people to move'

■ **FROM PAGE ONE**

'They are just ordinary people who have paid rather a lot of tax already; many of them are now retired and on fixed incomes. The mansion tax will destroy their well-earned retirements.'

Last month Mr Balls said that the tax would cost residents £250 a month for properties worth between £2 million and £3 million with those on incomes below £42,000 being allowed to defer until they sell their home or die.

Cllr Paget-Brown said: 'Some of them will be forced to move because of these swingeing additional death duties on a small group of elderly people who have been long-time dwellers in central London.

'In Kensington and Chelsea there are thousands of them, we have more than 7,000 high-band homes that have been in the same ownership since council tax records began in 1999.

● Do you live in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and are concerned abut the mansion tax? If so, let us hear your views. Email them to editorial at london weeklynews.co.uk

GET YOURSELF IN THE NEWS

Do you have a story?
Something to promote?
An event coming up?

Westminster & Pimlico NEWS

Thousands of children homeless at Christmas

Kensington NEWS

ple power protest r the mansion tax

Two die in balcony horror

Chelsea NEWS

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LWN NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER AND PIMLICO edit@londonweeklynews.co.uk

Flower bed to honour the fallen in Wesminster

■ WE WILL REMEMBER THEM: The Lord Mayor of Westminster Councillor Audrey Lewis, and Westminster Armed Forces Champion Councillor Rachael Robathan at the unveiling

WESTMINSTER City Council has unveiled a commemorative flower bed at Marble Arch, London, to remember all those who lived, fought and died during WW1.

Built 100 years after the start of World War One, the flower bed is another part of the council's 'Westminster Remembers' campaign.

The memorial was unveiled by the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Cllr Audrey Lewis, and Westminster's Armed Forces Champion, Cllr Rachael Robathan.

The ceremony in central London was well attended, with special guests representing the Army, Navy and Air Force paying respects, as well as eight Army Cadets from local Westminster City School.

Speaking after the flower bed unveiling, the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Cllr Audrey Lewis, said: "I would like to thank the Army, Navy, Air Force and local Army Cadets for attending this unique ceremony today, another special step in the campaign of remembrance.

"A century later, we still remember those who fought and died during the First World War – sacrificing their lives for our freedom."

Cllr Rachael Robathan, Westminster's Armed Forces Champion, said: "It is right that 100 years later we remember and pay respects to our fallen heroes, to whom we still owe so much.

"A public display like this one in central London – bright and beautiful for millions of tourists to see over the next four years – is a special way to do this. Westminster Council has strong community links with our local armed forces, and I am glad that we could share this ceremony with them today."

Lieutenant Colonel Giles Stibbe, Commander, London Central Garrison, said: "As soldiers serving in Westminster and with links to all parts of the British Isles, we are honoured to have been invited to the unveiling of Westminster's First World War commemorative flowerbed in Marble Arch. It's a beautiful flowerbed and its logo 'Westminster Remembers 1914-1918' is a lovely tribute."

During their speeches, the Lord Mayor of Westminster and Cllr Robathan also thanked Veolia and NSL for sponsoring the flowerbed.

An enchanted Christmas in Belgravia

THE timeless settings of Belgravia on Grosvenor's London estate will once again host a selection of seasonal treats on Elizabeth Street, Motcomb Street and Pimlico Road this Christmas.

Alongside the annual Christmas markets, a special appearance from Father Christmas and sleigh rides will also feature in this year's Christmas in Belgravia, inviting residents and visitors alike to sample an array of festive delights.

On Thursday, December 4th Motcomb Street invites you to take a stroll between its specialist shops and salons, offering you an array of gift ideas from their chocolatiers to high fashion boutiques or take the time to stop and taste the wonders of their Michelin-starred restaurants.

With its beautiful bijou cobbled street, tucked away behind bustling Knightsbridge and Sloane Street, its vibrant and timeless atmosphere is the perfect place to do your gift shopping in London this Christmas.

The Holland Park Opera Singers will be performing throughout the evening and you might even catch a glimpse of Father Christmas, so it's an evening for the entire family to enjoy. Shops open until 8.30pm.

Christmas in Belgrave Square Garden: on Saturday, December 6th from 1pm – 6.30pm will become a wonderful Christmas kingdom for all the family to enjoy.

The ticketed event includes sleigh rides, a cinema screening of the film Frozen presented by the Nomad Cinema, Christmas crafts, a fairy wish garden, petting zoo and a magical visit from Father Christmas in his grotto which will encapsulate every child's Christmas dream.

Tickets cost £15 and will be available via www.Grosvenorlondon.com - children aged three and under are free.

■ CHRISTMAS in Belgrave Square

NEWS FROM PIMLICO

The following day on Sunday December 7th from 12 noon – 5pm seasonal treats are on offer and Pimlico Road, Elizabeth Street and Motcomb Street will come to life as they are lit with sparkling Christmas lights.

Elizabeth Street will be transformed into a winter wonderland comprising 65 stalls. From handmade woven scarves and sheepskin boots, to gold plated jewellery and fine bone porcelain china; sweet and savoury pastries and cakes to handmade cheeseboards.

Father Christmas and his reindeer will make an appearance alongside Dinky the Elf, stilt walkers and balloon modellers. Music will be provided by the Fulham Brass Band, Eaton House School Choir, St Michael's Church Choir, St Barnabas Primary School, and St Peter's Eaton Square Church Choir.

During the whole of December, for the first time, there will be a celebration of the Christmas window displays from the unique Belgravia retailers. Four judges will reveal which shops and businesses have produced the most creative, the most glamourous and the most festive Christmas windows.

To get involved, entrants will be encouraged to donate something from their shop to be made into a Christmas hamper and donated to Reedham Children's Trust and the Living Communities Fund.

Belgravia Christmas Windows offers retailers an opportunity to come together, give enjoyment to customers and donate to charity, all in the name of Christmas spirit.

Jumeirah Lowndes Hotel will be launching a Christmas 'Stocking Filler' package offering guests a stay which includes a Harvey Nichols gift voucher, Continental Breakfast, and Afternoon tea for two in the Lowndes Bar, plus a late check-out option.

Interior design and antique specialist Lulu Lytle will be bringing a North-African flavour to Belgravia in the form of an Egyptian-inspired life-size camel puppet, made by the War Horse puppeteers.

Bespoke cake company, Peggy Porschen, will unveil its delicious new Christmas delights such as a Gingerbread Village Centerpiece and Red Velvet double layer snowman cake. Cubitt House will be offering their unique Christmas set menus at The Orangery, The Pantechnicon Rooms, and The Thomas Cubitt. Italian restaurant, Il Convivio, will also be creating indulgent Christmas menus.

Joanna Wood, Donna Ida, Plus One Gallery and Soane will all be unveiling their special Christmas inspired ranges.

Catherine Stevenson, Director, South Belgravia at Grosvenor's London estate, said: "Belgravia truly comes alive at Christmas and this year will be no exception. We will once again be transforming the area into a winter wonderland and will be putting on a host of festivities for all the family to enjoy.

"Following the success of last year's Christmas events, we are very much looking forward to another fantastic season and look forward to inviting visitors to once again experience the magic of Belgravia."

Farmers' market back in Pimlico

RARE organic water buffalo cheeses from Alham Wood Cheeses will be among 50 stalls selling the very best of British foods when Pimlico Farmers' Market returns on Saturday.

The market at Orange Square – on the corner of Pimlico Road and Ebury Street, SW1W 8UT – will open from 9am to 1pm.

Alham Wood produce a wide variety of handmade cheeses including their variations of ricotta, Cheddar, Caerphilly and mozzarella. The Somerset farm has been making rich and creamy cheese since introducing a herd of water buffalo in the 1990s. Water buffalo yoghurt is also available.

Among the dozens of fresh food stalls will be Wild Country Organics - run by Dr Adrian Izzard, who has pioneered growing organic vegetables and oriental leaves in glasshouses without artificial heating.

His farm at Abingdon, near Oxford, has been organic for 26 years.

Despite the winter cold, available will be fresh rocket, pak choi, celery, mustard greens and various herbs.

Dr Izzard promises that because of the quality, salads should last for at least a week in the fridge and most of the vegetables for a fortnight.

People power protest over mansion tax

KENSINGTON and Chelsea council leader Nick Paget-Brown is calling on residents to join 'a people's movement' to stop the retired and elderly being forced from their homes by the threatened Mansion Tax.

He is leading a drive to raise an army of objectors to pressure Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls to drop the proposal which has left residents frightened and alarmed.

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"This is a people's movement," he said. "If we are going to stop the tax, the campaign has to be less about the politics of the Mansion Tax and more about the real people who will end up paying it."

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"Many residents of Kensington and Chelsea are now in a state of very great fear and worry about the mansion tax proposals.

'They are just ordinary people who have paid rather a lot of tax already; many of them are now retired and on fixed incomes. The Mansion Tax will destroy their well-earned retirements.'

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Cllr Paget-Brown said: 'Some of them will be forced to move because of these swingeing additional death duties on a small group of elderly people who have been long-time dwellers in central London.

Basement developer pleads guilty to illegal advertising

CRANBROOK Basements Ltd pleaded guilty at Hammersmith Magistrates' Court on Tuesday 11 November to displaying illegal adverts in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Large adverts for the company were displayed at 2 Abingdon Villas and 10 Brunswick Gardens, both residential properties, where the company was carrying out basement extensions for the homeowners.

It is a criminal offence for a developer to display more than one advert on a building site in a conservation area unless it first receives advertisement consent from the local council. Furthermore, the advert can be no greater than two metres squared in area.

The company was warned by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's Planning Enforcement Team to remove the adverts within seven days but failed to do so. Cranbrook Basements Ltd pleaded guilty but in mitigation argued it was a first offence and it had since removed the adverts. The court was also informed that the company had been praised by the Considerate Constructors Scheme for maintaining professional building sites.

Subsequently District Judge Snow fined the company £1,000 for the offence at Brunswick Gardens with costs of £1,750. For the offence at Abingdon Villas he fined the company £1,000 with costs of £1,500. He also ordered the developer to pay a victim surcharge of £100.

Sensitive and historic areas

Councillor Timothy Coleridge, Cabinet Member for Planning Policy, said: "We will not allow developers to aggressively and illegally advertise themselves in sensitive and historic residential areas.

"We have the will and resources to pursue developers time and time again. Hopefully this developer and others realise this in the future and comply with the law."

■ **ILLEGAL: The offending signs which landed the developung in trouble**

Nicholas Holgate to be confirmed as royal borough new Town Clerk

NICHOLAS Holgate's appointment as Town Clerk at the Royal Borough is set to be formally approved by the council on Wednesday, December 3.

Often known as the chief executive in other councils, the Town Clerk is the chief officer of the council responsible for the delivery of services to residents.

He will also act as the borough's finance director, ensuring the effective management of council resources. In addition he advises the Mayor at council meetings.

A graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, Nicholas Holgate has worked in local government since 2008 when he joined the Royal Borough as Executive Director for Finance, Information Systems and Property. He has also served for 11 months as interim joint chief executive of Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham.

A career public servant, he started out as an administration trainee in HM Treasury in 1984. He was Director of Welfare Reform over 2001-2004 and then Chief Operating Officer at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport until 2008.

■ **NEW TOWN CLERK: Nicholas Holgate**

Two die in balcony horror

TWO men died and six other people were injured after part of a balcony of a building in Cadogan Square, Knightsbridge, collapsed.

Railings on the balcony gave way around 10 am on Froday.

The men who died, who had been delivering sofas to the property, were believed to have been on Polish origin.,

London Ambulance Service said eight people were treated for injuries, one man died at the scene and the another is in hospital.

Scotland Yard said: "A number of sofas were being delivered to the address, which was under renovation, prior to the railings on the balcony giving way."

A neighbour said: "They were trying to pull a couch up to the first-floor apartment with ropes. It was apparently too heavy. The fence broke off and fell on the workmen below."

A local resident said furniture and pianos "go in and out of the windows all the time".

The first-floor balcony is connected to property number 37, a five-storey terraced building being renovated ahead of owner, international lawyer Taher Helmy, 64, moving in. Mr Helmy said he was "devasted".

A police tent was erected on the pavement below and the street was closed. London Ambulance Service sent three ambulance crews, an advanced paramedic, the hazard response team and an air ambulance to the scene.

AROUND THE ROYAL BOROUGH

Residents are being encouraged to adopt

BOROUGH residents are being asked: "Could you adopt a child?"

Those who are interested have been encouraged to attend an information event on Thursday (November 27th) to find out what help is available.

Children in council care come from diverse backgrounds - and so do adopters.

Potential adopters can be single, married or in a relationship, including a civil partnership or same-sex relationship, but must be at least 21-years-old.

The information event, which is being organised by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster City Council and Hammersmith & Fulham Council, runs from 10 am to 12 noon and 6pm to 8pm.

To register to attend, or to request an information pack, phone 0800 183 781 2332 or email adoption@rbkc.gov.uk

Winter coat appeal

CALLING London is a charity that believes every Londoner should have a winter coat to keep them warm through the freezing winter months.

As long as they are in good condition, clean and warm, they'd love your unwanted winter coats. men's, women's, children's – they need them all.

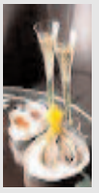
From Monday, November 24 to Friday, Decembe 5 r look out for their white collection boxes in the reception of following locations:

- **Customer Service Centre at Kensington Town Hall, W8**
- **Civic Reception at Kensington Town Hall, W8**
- **Chelsea Town Hall, SW3**
- **Pembroke Road Office, W8**
- **Malton Road Information Centre, W10**

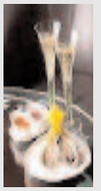
Calling London will collect the coats, then sort and redistribute them directly to charities that will hand them out to those Londoners most in need. Give a coat. Help someone keep warm this winter.

For more information visit www.callinglondon.org.uk Registered Charity Number 1142706

Ilias
Fish Shop



Champagne & Oysters



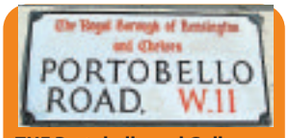
Every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday evening 6.00pm-11.00pm. Sunday 11.00am - 11.00pm

16 Granville Arcade, London SW9 8PR
0207 274 1665

LONDON WEEKLY NEWS community

Yara is Portobello's Christmas star

■ ALTOGETHER NOW: Choir leader Sarah Clarke leads the singers from the Sing to Live Dalgarno Trust group



THE Portobello and Golborne Road Markets can trace their roots back to the 19th century, and have flourished since to become London's leading antiques market.
Next year the market celebrates its 150th anniversary.
The market, one of the most famous in London, is an exciting and vibrant destination which draws in millions of visitors every year. The markets are diverse by nature, creating a bohemian atmosphere, which is enhanced by the vintage clothing and delectable food that is available.
The side streets leading from Portobello Road teem with designer boutiques, luxury brand stores and cafes serving the Notting Hill area.

■ ALL SMILES: The Mayor Maighread Condon-Simmonds joins members of the Sing to Live Chelsea Theatre group

CHRISTMAS came early for an 11 year-old Kensington schoolgirl.

Along with dozens of others, Yara, a pupil at St Barnabus and St Philip's Church of England Primary School, entered a competition to design a Christmas card for the Portobello and Golborne Market as part of their festive celebrations.

Yara's card, showing the Christmas tree in Portobello Square, was unanimously chosen as the winner by a panel comprising stall holders, members of the Portobello and Golborne Markets Committee and staff at the Street Trading Office, operated by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Yara's prize was £50 worth of Christmas treats, 25 greeting cards printed with her design and the privilege of joining the Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Maighread Condon-Simmonds, in switching on the lights of the giant Christmas tree which marked the beginning of the festive celebrations in and around the market.

Yara also won a £50 Christmas goodie bag for her school.

by Philip Evans

Before the switch-on, Mark Barr BEM, chairman of Portobello and Golborne Management Committee, welcomed a large crowd and after the turning on of the lights the Mayor congratulated Yara on her winning entry and wished all the market traders a "very Happy Christmas".

Festive entertainment was provided by singers from the Sing to Live choir from the Dalgarno Trust, choristers from the nearby Sion Manning School, and the Sing To Live Chelsea Theatre Group - a new singing for health programme which meets regularly at the Chelsea Theatre and the Dalgarno Community Centre.

Mr Barr said he was delighted with the success of the event and commented on the community spirit which continued to make the market such a success.

Stallholders are looking forward to a busy Christmas and will be giving full support to Small Business Saturday of December 6th when the emphasis will be on inspiring and promoting small businesses nationwide.

Plans are also afoot for some special celebrations to celebrate the market's 150th anniversary next year. Look out for full details in future editions of the London Weekly News.

■ YARA'S prize winning design - see page 19

■ IN TUNE: Students from Sion Manning School

■ WELCOME ALL: Mark Barr starts off the proceedings

Turning on the Christmas lights at Portobello Market

■ WARMING UP: The Sing to Live Chelsea Theatre group

■ ENTERTAINING THE CROWD: Students from Sion Manning School

■ FOR ME? The Mayor receives a gift from Mark Barr of the Portobello and Golborne Management Committee

ANYONE who subscribes to the view that community spirit in London is a distant memory was nowhere to be seen in the Portobello Road when the market traders turned on their Christmas lights.

Graced by the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Maighread Condon-Simmonds, the Portbello and Golborne Management Committee, led by chairman Mark Barr, put on a simple but inspiring event to get Christmas off to a flying start in the capital's most famous market.

It also turned out to be a great day for 11 year-old Yara, from St Barnabus and St Philip's Church of England Primary School, who won the competition for the best designed Christmas card. It was probably a day she will never forget as she got the real star treatment with press photographers jostling for her picture.

At the same time, just around the corner from Portobello Square, Bob Geldof and a host of top name from the music world were recording Band Aid's "Do They Know It Christmas" single to raise money for Ebola victims.

This provided a snapshot of life in London – an A-list event on one street and around the corner, in Basing Street, committed Londoners going about the business of making their community a special place to live and work.

Philip Evans

■ THE BIG SWITCH ON: The Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea Councillor Maighread Condon-Simmonds with Yara, above, and below with singers from Dalgarno Community Champions

■ If you are organising a community event you would like featured in this newspaper, just email editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk and we will be pleased to arranged photographic coverage.

LWN NEWS FROM KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

Kensington road safety 'of huge concern'

WE NEED ACTION NOW: Labour Parliamentary candidate Dr Rob Abouharb, pictured on Earl's Court Road, is calling for greater road safety

"IN 2013, 64 people were killed or seriously injured in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. This is 64 too many," says Labour's parliamentary candidate Dr Rod Abouharb.

"The borough states a commitment to reducing this number by one-third by 2020 – why aim so low? Their target should be zero."

Road safety in Kensington is increasingly of concern, with a reported increase in 2014 in road racing, joy-riding, and rat-running causing huge anxiety among residents.

Two-thirds of accidents involve cyclists and pedestrians. The perpetrators are often cars travelling through, delivery vans, and construction lorries on tight schedules which encourage carelessness. The problem of racing mopeds and super-cars is also prevalent in certain areas; this noisy and dangerous habit is well known to police who do very little to control it.

Dr Abouharb is calling on the borough to increase safety by implementing a five point plan:

1. Immediate and enforced imposition of 20mph speed limit on all borough controlled roads, and dialogue with TfL to implement 20mph speed limit on red routes.
2. Segregated cycle lanes on all major roads, to incorporate the Cycle Superhighway.
3. Immediate review of accident black spots, particularly in relation to the placing of pedestrian and pelican crossings and of mini-roundabouts.
4. Campaigning to require government to enforce retrofitting all lorries with reversing beepers and wide side mirrors within 12 months.
5. Proper monitoring and control of speeding and joy-riding mopeds, cars and super-cars.

Dr Abouharb adds: 'Residents of Kensington deserve to enjoy safe neighbourhoods where they are not taking their life in their hands by crossing a road. The aim should be that the roads are safe enough for Year Six children to cycle or walk to school alone. They should not have to cross race-tracks."

"We need action now; complacency will not prevent accidents."

Charles Spencer star guest at London History Festival

LEADING historians and authors from all over the country took part in the London History Festival. The festival was organised by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Star attraction at this year's festival was Princess Diana's brother, Charles Spencer, who talked about his latest book, "Killers of the King" which included a discussion on the fates of the men who prosecuted, judged and executed King Charles I.

Other diverse and thought-provoking topics covered included the relationship between Hitler and Stalin, how the First World War shaped the 20th century, the Wars of the Roses and the rise of the Tudors and how the story behind the extraordinary girl who became Joan of Arc.

In partnership with Waterstones, festival-goers were enthralled by lectures and discussions from David Kynaston, Roger Moorehouse, Richard Overy, David Reynolds, Dan Jones and Helen Castor

The festival took place at the Kensington Central Library.

KILLERS OF THE KING: Charles Spencer spoke about his latest book

Schools feature in moving World War One event

THEY went with songs to the battle, they were young, straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow. They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted, they fell with their faces to the foe..."

These were just some of the haunting words heard at the Borough Council's recent World War One spoken word event held at Kensington Town Hall.

Hosted by the Royal Borough's Mayor, Cllr Maighread Condon-Simmonds, and the Deputy Mayor of London, Cllr Victoria Borwick, the event featured pupils from seven schools and a local cadet unit who read poetry and prose from the Great War to a 100-strong audience.

The cadet unit – 46F Kensington Air Cadets – also treated guests to musical performances.

The schools which took part were: Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School, Chelsea Academy, Holland Park School , Lycée Francais Charles de Gaulle, Queen's Gate Senior School, Sion-Manning RC Girls School and St Thomas More Language College.

After listening to the pupils speak, the Mayor said: "This evening really demonstrated the pupils' interest in literature and their abilities in public speaking."

"The Royal Borough has without doubt some of the finest schools in the country and it was a delight to work with them to arrange this spectacular and moving event.

"I'd like to thanks the head teachers, staff, governors, pupils, families, friends and carers from all the schools for taking part."

The event was supported by a number of high-ranking military personnel, including the Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London, Wing Commander Mike Dudgeon O.B.E., D.L.; Representative Deputy Lieutenant for the Royal Borough, Lady Arnold, D.L.; Chief of Staff, H.Q., London District, Colonel Hugh Bodington and Chief Executive and Lieutenant-Governor, Royal Hospital Chelsea, Major General David McDowall, C.B.E.

Special composition for Remembrance

MAJOR Phil Shannon is one of the Captains of Invalids at the Royal Hospital who looks after the welfare of the Chelsea Pensioners – but his great love in life is music.

Having been a former Director of Music for the Welsh and Irish Guards, he assists with the running of the Royal Hospital Band and also arranges and composes in his spare time.

In this World War One centenary year Major Shannon composed a special piece of music to remember the fallen at this year's Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall, inspired by a moving poem:

"Last year, I was sent a poem called 'When Duty Called' by John Foster, the Vice President National Memorial Arboretum Branch Royal British Legion. Having had two great uncles who fought on the Somme, one of whom won an award for gallantry, I was keen in this centenary year to honour all those who served and set the words to music.

"The composition quickly took shape and was performed by the massed bands of the Household Division at the Royal Albert Hall as part of this year's Festival of Remembrance. It was not broadcast on this occasion but was hopefully enjoyed by all present for the live performance."

WHEN DUTY CALLED
To mark the 1914 centenary

When duty called, they played their part,
So filled with hopes, so bold in heart.
These pals in arms were men and boys.
Lest we forget.

When battles raged in filth and mud,
They gave their best and always would
In times of need, they stood the test.
Lest we forget, lest we forget.

On foreign soil, they wrote goodbyes
In silent spells, with muffled cries.
Each start of day could mark the end.
Lest we forget.

With losses high and grieving hearts,
When victory came there were no parts
Where pain was gone or left aside.
Lest we forget, lest we forget.

The poppy shows our aim is clear
For lasting peace, not lives in fear.
When duty called they played their part,
So filled with hopes, so bold in heart.
Our men in arms, they gave their all
When duty called, when duty called.

Words by T. John Foster

THE annual Friends' Carol Service at the Royal Hospital takes place on Thursday, December 11th at 7pm.

Visitors are warmly invited to attend the service in the chapel, followed by a Christmas gift bazaar with mince pies and mulled wine in the Great Hall.

Tickets cost £25 and early booking is advised.

The chapel doors will open at 6.30pm and the service will commence at 7pm sharp.

MAJOR Phil Shannon

CUTTY SARK

963 TONS OF AMAZING THINGS TO SEE AND DO

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ROYAL MUSEUMS GREENWICH

CUTTY SARK GREENWICH

LWN NEWS FROM CENTRAL LONDON editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

Silver thimbles paid for the park shelters

THE influential Kensington Society, founded in 1865, has succeeded in ensuring that two charming First World War shelters in Kensington Gardens will be protected for the future.

The two shelters are located east of the Broadwalk on either side of the paths leading to the Round Pound.

Passers-by could be easily forgiven for thinking they are just a part of the park scene but the Kensington Society has unveiled their fascinating history in the autumn edition of their informative newsletter.

During the First World War Miss Elizabeth Hope-Clark, of Wimbledon, started a fund based on collecting silver thimbles to raise money initially for an ambulance. In one month she collected over 30,000 thimbles and bought her first ambulance, properly named "The Silver Thimble".

The fund went on to raise enough money to pay for a further five ambulances, five hospital motor launches, beds in numerous hospitals and medical care and rescue services throughout the war.

At the end of the war, there was still money in the fund which was spent on the two shelters as a memorial to the soldiers and sailors who gave their lives. The shelters were erected in 1919 and have provided shelter ever since.

The Royal Parks Agency manages their care and has recently renovated them. Unfortunately, it has removed the bench seating which is an integral part of the structures. The Society will be pressing the Royal Parks Agency to reinstate the seating so they can resume their role as shelters.

The society is encouraging members of the Friends of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, by emailing support to Linda Lennon at chiefexecutive@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk

Although the shelters are actually in Westminster, the Kensington Society has succeeded in getting the shelters listed by English Heritage as a contribution to the commemoration of the 1914–18 war.

SPLASHING OUT AT CHRISTMAS? HERE'S AN IDEA -

A bottle of festive bubbly for the price of a West End apartment!

THERE'S bubbly for all budgets this Christmas, with the price of a bottle ranging from just over a tenner to just under the cost of a West End apartment.

The cheapest champagne is from Aldi, where their Veuve Monsigny is selling at £11.99. The supermarket says 'it has a golden hue, small bubbles and a nice crisp flavour'. The most 'central' Aldi is at 142 Kilburn High Road NW6.

Alternatively, Knightsbridge-based Prodiguer Brands are the exclusive stockist for Gout de Diamants, one bottle of which costs the equivalent of 100,083 of the Aldi champagne.

● By LWN reporter **GEOFF BAKER**
geoff baker@london-news.co.uk

That bottle is a limited edition created by designer Alexander Amosu at a price of £1,200,000.

That is just £50,000 less than the price of a two-bed flat in Goodge Street and serving it at a Christmas dinner for six will work out at £200,000 per glass of the big whizz fizz made from 100 per cent Grand Cru grapes from a family-owned vineyard in Oger.

You probably would not want to take it with the empties to the bottle bank as Alexander Amosu's design features a logo crafted from 18 carat white gold with the centrepiece of a 19 carat flawless white diamond and a white gold label engraved with the buyer's name.

If bought by the case, Prodiguer Brands' limited edition would cost £14,400,000, as opposed to £143.88 for 12 bottles of the Aldi champagne.

Borough clamping down on the illegal loan sharks

THE scourge of illegal money lending and the problems associated with it was targeted by Trading Standards officers from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea during National Consumer Week earlier this month.

Trading Standards officers have been working with England Illegal Money Lending Team (IML) to tackle illegal money lenders in the borough.

Also known as loan sharks, illegal money lenders operate without a consumer credit licence and offer loans at extremely high interest rates. While they can try to give the impression of offering a community service, their practices are often illegal.

As debts to illegal money lenders are actually unenforceable in law, the lenders can look to enforce debts through intimidation, violence and other illicit means.

A charter was signed at Kensington Town Hall which will result in further work between IML, the council and key partners which will see:

● improved intelligence gathering about the scale of the problem in Kensington and Chelsea

● promotion of alternative solutions for people in debt, such as credit unions

● potential victims discouraged from going to loan sharks in the first place

● training for front line staff.

Cllr Tim Ahern, Cabinet Member for Environmental Health, said: "We intend to clamp down on the misery and worry that loan sharks bring. This practice is illegal and it is important that residents are aware of this. It is equally important that they are aware of the safe and regulated places they can get loans such as Your Credit Union.

"I am very pleased that the signing of this charter signals a new chapter in our efforts to put an end to illegal money lending in the borough."

For further information about illegal money lending contact Trading Standards on 020 7361 3002 or email trading.standards@rbkc.gov.uk

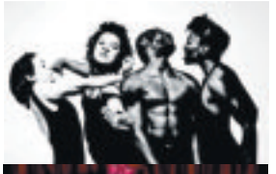
For more information on Your Credit Union and how to contact it www.rbkc.gov.uk/communityandlocallife/yourcreditunionycu.aspx

December at Greenwich Dance

Start the festive season in style at the beautiful 1930s Borough Hall.

All welcome, great atmosphere, bar open throughout & party after the show!

Fri 5 Dec 7:30PM
Just Us Dance Theatre
A theatrical experience combining hip-hop, contemporary dance, spoken word & DJing

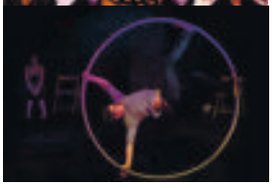


Sat 6 Dec 8:00PM
The Ball
A night of ballroom and swing with live music from Kai's Cats

Book by Fri 21 Nov and get a free glass of Prosecco

20% off group bookings of 10 or more

Sat 13 Dec 3:30PM & 7:30PM
Silver Lining
A fast-paced, feel-good explosive new circus show to delight all ages



For more info and tickets:
www.greenwichdance.org.uk / 020 8293 9741

Greenwich Dance, The Borough Hall, Royal Hill SE10 8RE

gDA GREENWICH DANCE

ROYAL borough of GREENWICH

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

One Westminster transforming lives

ONE Westminster is a new local charity which sets out to transform lives in Westminster communities and beyond by supporting local volunteering and community action.

One Westminster has been created with the aim of expanding and combining the community services of two influential and successful voluntary sector organisations - Volunteer Centre Westminster and Voluntary Action Westminster. Both of these organisations have long-standing track records of voluntary and community action in the City of Westminster, dating back to 1965.

Operating from three sites in W9, NW1 and SW1, One Westminster has consolidated the range of services provided by both organisations, enabling the new charity to build substantially upon the existing community projects and services previously provided .

For further information contact: call on Mondays and Tuesdays - 020 7604 8811

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Still failing the disabled

SIR: Following the shocking findings from BBC London, which showed that numerous high street restaurant chains were inaccessible to wheelchair users, I would like to call for more pressure to be placed on businesses who fail to provide provisions for the disabled.

TED MILL - MBE

As the CEO of The British Polio Fellowship, a charity that supports and empowers those living with the late effects of Polio and Post Polio Syndrome (PPS) in the UK, it's part of my duty to ensure that our members' rights are not going unserved.

In what is often referred to as a wheelchair accessible nation, it is still apparent more needs to be done to ensure businesses are adhering to the Equality Act which obliges organisations to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. Well known, successful high street chains named in the study included some of the nation's favourite coffee bars, and our national postal service provider (the latter reportedly making a wheelchair user carry out a financial transaction in the street) and quite frankly you would expect better from established businesses like these.

Whilst all those involved, with the exception of one, apologised and pledged to improve their disabled access, the government needs to do more to ensure equality laws are adhered to completely. With London recently making a further £75million available to make its underground system more accessible, it seems that businesses should play their part and ensure wheelchair users aren't left in the cold.

Ted Hill MBE
CEO - The British Polio Fellowship

● LWN would like to hear from those who live or work in Central London. Tell us the best and worst aspects of life in the heart of the world's most exciting city. Email your view to:
editorial at londonweeklynews.co.uk

DARK UNIVERSE

NOW SHOWING AT THE PETER HARRISON PLANETARIUM

The galaxies, stars, planets and everything we can see make up less than 5% of the universe.
What is the other 95%?

Narrated by
Neil deGrasse Tyson

Dark Universe was developed by the American Museum of Natural History, New York (www.amnh.org), in collaboration with the Californian Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, and GOTO INC., Tokyo, Japan

Book now rmg.co.uk/space
Cutty Sark Greenwich

ROYAL OBSERVATORY GREENWICH

LONDON WEEKLY NEWS feature

■ Keeping One Show's Alex Jones safe on the side of a mountain

■ Saving Johnny Depp in The Chocolate Factory...

All in a day's climb for Andy

ANDY KIRKPATRICK, the mountaineer who supported Alex Jones from the BBC 'One Show' to climb 1,200 feet of vertical rock for Sport Relief, will be one of the keynote speakers at an event in London hosted by mountaineering legend Sir Chris Bonington this week.

One Show presenter Alex Jones said she was in constant fear of her life during a three day climb of Utah's Moonlight Buttress Mountain. She was full of praise for Andy who helped her to cope with fear, tangled ropes, and sleeping and going to the loo on a flimsy fabric sleeping platform tied to the rock face. Her climb raised over a million pounds.

Andy is a captivating public speaker with a razor sharp stand-up sense of humour. At the 'First on the Continents' event, Andy will speak about the new route he climbed in 2013 in Antarctica on Ulvetanna, 'The Wolf's Tooth', and about his unpredictable climbing life. He mixes stories about incredible challenges in the mountains with hilarious tales including saving Johnny Depp in the film Charlie and the Chocolate Factory!

Joining Andy is a star studded line up of international climbers who will also tell of their epic adventures and mountaineering firsts across each of the seven continents.

SIMON YATES will relive his epic 'Touching the Void' story of survival after a first ascent on Siula Grande in South America with Joe Simpson. He was faced with a chilling decision which forced him to cut the rope joining him to stricken partner Joe. Their subsequent battle for life has been told in a best selling book and major film.

ALEX HUBER (Germany), at the forefront of world rock climbing, will speak of his terrifying un-roped solo ascent of the overhanging Cima Grande face in the Dolomites. Reinhold Messner said of the climb "500 meters of absolute exposure, without protection and possibility of return, a brilliant deed, which can hardly be surpassed in elegance".

SIMONE MORO (Italy) speaks of his long dreamed of first winter ascents of the 8000 metre Himalayan peaks: Nanga Parbat, Gasherbrum II and Makalu which had defeated so many before him - cutting edge climbing.

MICHAEL KENNEDY (USA) will speak of first ascents in the harshest of mountain environments – Alaska, including the Wall of Shadows on Mount Hunter.

PAT LITTLEJOHN OBE has long been a climbing pioneer in Africa and speaks about his new routes on Mount Poi in Kenya including the 600metre E6 route *Dark Safari*, one of the hardest routes on the continent.

DOUG SCOTT CBE, the first Briton to climb Everest, speaks about a very different landscape - his new route on the highest peak in Australasia - the 4,884 metre Cartenz Pyramid amidst the jungle of New Guinea.

Organised by Doug Scott the event will raise funds for Comunity Action Nepal, the charity which he set up to support mountain communities in Nepal.

Doug says: "It will be a great treat to showcase the achievements of Andy and these other legendary mountaineers in London in order to support the work of Community Action Nepal. Whether you are an armchair adventurer or an active climber you will certainly be thrilled and entertained by this fantastic line up of climbers from across the globe."

● **The event takes place on Thursday, November 27 (10.30am – 9.00pm) at the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR Tickets £20.00 & £30.00 from www.porterspro-gressuk.org or 01768 484842**

■ MADE IT: Alex Jones conquers her own personal mountain
Photo by Trevor Christensen

■ WELCOME TO MY OFFICE: Another challenging climb for Any Kirpatrick

FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

London WEEKLY News

ISSUE 1 PICK UP A FREE COPY Thursday, November 27th 2014

Thank you Ma'am

LWN ROYAL SPECIAL

LONG MAY SHE REIGN OVER US

Today The London Weekly News is proud to launch a new campaign for the capital – a push for mass celebrations in London in September next year when The Queen will mark a milestone that will be the greatest in the history of the British people.

By Geoff Baker

For on Wednesday September 9th The Queen will become the longest-reigning monarch that the nation has ever known.

The Queen's reign since February 6th 1952 will be an achievement unparalleled among all other kings and queens of the centuries, the day when Her Majesty will truly deserve a new title – Elizabeth The Great.

On that day The Queen will enter the history books when she passes the record set by her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria with a 63-year reign.

Astonishingly, no official celebrations are yet planned to commemorate the most momentous triumph in the history of the British monarchy.

Bank holidays and nationwide celebrations marked The Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977, her Golden Jubilee in 2002 and her Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

But the authorities say 'nothing is planned' for 2015.

The *Weekly News* campaign aims to change that and today we call on the capital to back a lobby for London to salute our greatest Londoner in glorious style.

There has never been a more fitting time; for besides the unique milestone of her reign, The Queen is now held in greater affection than ever before.

She is the constitutional monarch of 16 of the 53 member states of the Commonwealth of Nations which she also heads. She is Britain's No.1 tourist attraction, with all things royal drawing more visitors from abroad than anything else in the land.

But more than that, to her people she is the most treasured of all national treasures; not just as Queen, but as a woman who has always led by exemplary and peerless example.

Witness to that was the public's unprecedented reception at the commemorations on Remembrance Sunday. As The Queen left The Cenotaph, the crowd of more than 10,000 spontaneously broke into applause, an event that has never happened before.

Was the applause for her courage in attending the service when police

TURN TO PAGE 2

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN - our greatest Londoner

Photo by David Parker

INSIDE

- Where to see your favourite royal
- The longest and shortest reigning monarchs

THE paper serving ROYAL London

ROYAL LONDON campaigning for a royal celebration

Elizabeth II will become our longest reigning monarch

FROM page 1

and intelligence services were in heightened alert for fear of a terrorist attack against her? Was it for her leading the nation and the Commonwealth with such dignity on the 100th anniversary of the First World War? Or was it in simple recognition that here was an 88-year-old great-grandmother doing what she has long considered to be most important, her duty?

Duty has been the hallmark of The Queen's long reign. Unlike some other monarchs, it has been her commitment to her people which becomes her legend most.

She first gave notice of her intent in 1947, when she marked her coming-of-age with a 21st birthday radio broadcast to the Commonwealth that included a solemn pledge: 'I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service'.

That service has never wavered; through wars, calamities, controversies, national tragedies and her own family heartaches, Ich Dien have been her bywords and next September will provide Britain's opportunity to say thank you for that.

London's authorities have yet to think, let alone decide, on how best to mark the milestone, but there is every confidence that The Queen's historic achievement of the longest-ever reign will be marked as only London can.

It may be road-to-road street parties, a school holiday, special services, the best-ever party in the parks, concerts, fly-pasts, sail-pasts or pageants, but London is expected to rise to the occasion and pundits predict that Mayor Boris Johnson may lead the campaign for celebrations.

● How do YOU think The Queen's longest reign should be best marked and celebrated? Email your ideas to editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

■ AT THE CENOTAPH on Remembrance Day the Queen received a spontaneous round of applause

■ DUTY BEFORE SELF: Her Majesty's coronation in 1953

Photo by Richard Gardner

The days of their lives

QUEEN Victoria currently holds the record for the longest reign for any king or queen of the British Isles, with 23,226 days [63 years, 216 days] on the throne.

On June 20th 1837 William IV died at the age of 71 and the 18-year-old Victoria wrote in her diary, 'I was awoke at 6 o'clock by Mamma, who told me that the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Conyngham were here and wished to see me. I got out of bed and went into my sitting-room [only in my dressing gown] and alone, and saw them. Lord Conyngham then acquainted me that my poor Uncle, the King, was no more and had expired at 12 minutes past 2 this morning, and consequently that I am Queen'.

Victoria reigned until January 22nd 1901, when she died at the age of 81. Her reign beat that of George III [59 years and 96 days], James I [57 years, 246 days], Henry III [56 years, 29 days], Edward III [50 years, 147 days] and William I of Scotland [48 years, 360 days].

But what of the monarchs who reigned for the shortest times?

Harold II reigned only for 282 days when his rule was brought to an end by the Normans on October 14th 1066 at the Battle of Hastings. Edward V [1470-1483] managed only 86 days and was never even crowned. Nor was Edgar II, whose reign only lasted the 63 days from October 15th to December 17th of 1066.

But the record for the shortest time as king goes to the little-known but excellently-named Sweyn Forkbeard. The first of the Danish kings of England, King Sweyn, father of Cnut The Great, was crowned on Christmas Day of 1,001 years ago and reigned only for 40 days until he died on February 3rd 1014.

The disputed 'reign' of the de facto queen Lady Jane Grey [1536-1554] was even sorrier. Jane, 'The Nine Days Queen', had her rule of not even a fortnight halted on July 19th 1553 when the Privy Council had her imprisoned in the Tower Of London and charged with high treason, for which she was later beheaded.

WHERE TO SEE THE ROYALS

FULL details of future and recent events in the ever-busy diaries of the many members of The Royal Family are available from the official website www.royal.gov.uk but here's the London schedule for the week ahead for Where To See A Royal.

Thursday November 27th

● **The Duke Of Edinburgh,** Admiral and member of The Royal Yacht Squadron, and The Princess Royal, honorary member, will attend the squadron's annual winter dinner at Trinity House EC4.

● **The Earl Of Wessex**, trustee of The Duke Of Edinburgh's Award, will hold a lunch at Buckingham Palace. Later, as honorary member of The Caledonian Club, he will attend the St. Andrews Dinner at 9 Halkin Street, Belgravia SW1.

● **The Countess Of Wessex**, patron of Tomorrow's People, will attend the 30th anniversary awards for achievement at The Jumeriah Carlton Tower Hotel, Cadogan Place EC1.

● **The Duchess of Gloucester**, as Royal Colonel of 7th Battalion The Rifles, will attend the Officers' Mess Dinner at The Rifles Club, Davies Street W1.

Friday November 28th

● **The Duchess of Gloucester,** President of the Royal Academy of Music, will present the Kohn Foundation Bach Prize at the academy in Marylebone Road NW1.

● **The Duke of Kent** will attend a concert by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at The Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre SE1.

Sunday November 30th

● **The Duchess of Gloucester,** Honorary President of the Lawn Tennis Association, will attend the Wheelchair Tennis Masters at Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park E20. Later, with the Duke of Gloucester, she will attend the Friends of St. Paul's Cathedral Advent Procession Service at the cathedral EC4.

Tuesday December 2nd

● **The Duke of Edinburgh**, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, will visit the First World War exhibition at the Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon NW9.

● **The Duke of Gloucester**, patron of the Japan Society, will attend a service to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the return of The Clove ship to London at Westminster Abbey SW1.

● **The Duke of Kent,** patron of St. Mungo's Community Housing Association, will attend a carol concert at St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street EC4

● **The Duchess of Gloucester,** patron of Asthma UK, will attend a Christmas Carol Service at St. Luke's & Christ Church, Sydney Street SW3.

● **Princess Alexandra** will attend the Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust Advent Service at the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks, Birdcage Walk SW1.

● **The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh** will give an evening reception for members of the Diplomatic Corps at Buckingham Palace.

Wednesday December 3rd

● **The Countess of Wessex**, patron of Shooting Star Chase, will attend a reception at St. James's Palace.

● **The Princess Royal,** president of the Royal Yachting Association, will attend a council meeting at Bell Wharf Lane EC3. Later, as Master of the Corporation of Trinity House, she will attend the 500th anniversary carol service at St. Olave's Church, Hart Street EC3, and, as patron of the Spinal Injuries Association, she will attend a dinner at The Dorchester, Park Lane W1.

● **The Duke of Gloucester** will unveil the Korean War Memorial at Victoria Embankment Gardens WC2 and later, with the Duchess of Gloucester, as Protector he will attend the Anglo-Danish Society's Scholarship Programme dinner to mark its 90th anniversary at Draper's Hall, Throgmorton Avenue EC2.

ROYAL LONDON

Last chance to see remaining poppies

Wave goodbye ...

Photo by John Alex Maguire

BEEFEATERS at The Tower Of London are preparing for massive crowds this weekend as the final chance to see the poppy memorial that has warmed the hearts of the nation causes a last-minute rush.

Sunday will be the last day to see Wave, the curling swathe of the ceramic poppies which rises from the moat to create an arch over the entrance to the Tower and the last remaining section of the display, Blood Swept Lands Of Seas Of Red.

Opening times at the Tower are 9.0 am to 4.30 pm on Saturday and 10.0 am to 4.30 pm on Sunday. Last admission on Sunday will be at 4.0 pm. After that, the remaining poppies from the 888,246 which formed the original display will be taken away.

Wave and The Weeping Window, the cascade of poppies that poured out of a window 20ft from the ground and into the moat, will then be prepared on their huge metalwork structures in readiness to be toured all over Britain from next year until 2018, the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.

After it has been toured around the nation, the poignant display, created by ceramic artist Paul Cummins and arranged by stage designer Tom Piper, will be put on permanent display at The Imperial War Museum.

The 888,246 poppies each represented a British fatality in The First World War. The Culture Secretary, Sajid Javid, has praised the poppy memorial as 'public art at its most powerful and moving'.

> **'I did not realise that it would catch on so well and catch people's imagination to this extent, the response has been overwhelming'**

It is believed that Mr Cummins and Mr Piper will be recognised in the Queen's honours list for their outstanding work.

Up to four million people are expected to have experienced the poppies by the time that the display closes on Sunday.

'It's become a massive worldwide project,' said Mr Cummins, 'I did not realise that it would catch on so well and catch people's imagination to this extent, the response has been overwhelming.'

One visitor to the Tower, Mr Michael Hollands, told the Weekly News: 'I came up from East Devon to see this remarkable display and to pay my respects to those whom it so stunningly salutes. It was the complete and utter silence of the crowd as we walked past the poppies that moved me deeply, it was a profound experience which I shall never forget.

'This display is Britain at its best, when we do something like this we do it really well. I hope that the talk is true that the artists responsible will be recognised with an official honour.'

The poppy display will close on Sunday with a Guardsman playing the Last Post at sunset.

● A new exhibition of the role that the Tower played in the first war includes extraordinary photographs and films from 1914, when the Tower was used for the recruitment and training of soldiers. The exhibition, which includes close-up viewing of archived soldiers' diaries, also features the illustrated story of how 1,600 City workers joined up to form the 'Stockbrokers' Battalion'. As they were enlisted in the Tower's dry moat, known as the Tower Ditch, they referred to themselves throughout the war as 'the Ditchers'. By the end of the conflict in 1918, only 50 of the original Ditchers were still in active service.

● Tickets to visit the Tower, which includes access to the Crown Jewels display, exhibitions including Coins & Kings, the Line Of Kings, the Yeoman Warder guided tour and the White Tower tour, are at the gate £22 for adults, £11 for children and £59 for families of five. Reductions are available for online bookings at www.hrp.org.uk/toweroflondon

Tower of London FACT FILE

● **THE Tower was founded by William the Conqueror towards the end of the 1066. The primary function of military stronghold of the Tower didn't change until the late 19th century.**

● **RAVENS have always been kept at the Tower of London. It was said that if the ravens were removed, the Tower would crumble and a great harm would befall the nation. Ever since, at least six ravens have been kept at the Tower, they each have one wing clipped to make sure they don't fly too far from home.**

● **THE Crown Jewels were moved to the Martin Tower after the Jewel House was demolished. The total value of the jewels is estimated to exceed £20 billion.**

● **TWENTY-two executions have taken place within the Tower of London.**

SHOWBIZ SPECIAL *New star for West End Cats*

Nothing shabby about Nicole

By Geoff Baker

YOU'VE got to hand it to Andrew Lloyd Webber, he doesn't half think outside of the box – who else would have thought of asking Nicole Scherzinger to play a part which is usually described as 'withered'?

It's rather like asking Usain Bolt to run slow or Albert Einstein to be stupid.

When the superstar beauty takes the lead role in the eagerly-anticipated return of Cats at the London Palladium on December 6th she'll be playing Grizabella, the character described in the legendary musical's production notes as 'a withered, shabby old cat, too decrepit to dance'.

'Shabby' and 'withered' are not terms usually associated with the woman who had a No 1 hit in 16 countries with a succinctly-titled song 'Don't Cha Wish Your Girlfriend Was Hot Like Me?'A Google search for 'decrepit Nicole Scherzinger' unsurprisingly brings nil results.

Indeed it is difficult to think of a less decrepit star in the entire firmament of showbiz right now. Besides selling 16 million solo records including her acclaimed new album Big Fat Lie, this is the singer voted 9th in the FHM poll of the planet's 100 Sexiest Women, the dancer who was fined thousands of dollars for outraging Kuala Lumpur by her 'sexually-suggestive' bopping, the head girl of The Pussycat Dolls whose sizzler videos caused chaps to invent the Ice Bucket Challenge.

So what is one of the world's top 10 pinups doing playing an old cat?

Ah, well there's the twist; Andrew didn't get to be Lord Lloyd Webber by sticking to the same ideas, when he asked Nicole to help revive the musical he meant not to just bring Cats back to the West End for the first time in 12 years, but revive it as in to give the show more wow than miaow.

'It's not going to be the old Grizabella that people are used to seeing,' Nicole told ITN's Lucy Jones.

What, a sexy Grizabella?

'Yeah, we're bringing it,' she grinned.

No wonder that advance ticket sales for the production that will mark Nicole's West End debut have already exceeded £5 million, the massive draw of her huge celebrity has made one of the most successful musicals of all time the smash hit of London again, even before it has opened.

Obviously, Lloyd Webber needed a stellar name on whom to hang a revival of the show that originally ran to 8,949 performances in London and her popularity with millions of X Factor fans meant that Nicole, who was just three-years-old when Cats first began in 1981, is just that.

But it was being much more than a famous face that won her the role, as her friend Simon Cowell explains.

'Nicole is one of the best live performers I've ever seen,' says Simon.

'If you want an example of how to do it right, it's Nicole; her focus, performance and vocals.'

Singing Grizabella's part will be a challenge even for Nicole's strong soprano because Grizabella's songs include 'Memory', the show's climax, one of the biggest hit songs in the history of musicals, a song which has been recorded by more than 160 artists, a huge hit for both Barbra Streisand and the original Cats queen Elaine Paige, and which has been played more than 46,000 times on TV and radio in the UK.

Anyone doing a new cover of such a classic is bound to be scrutinised by London's notoriously-picky theatre critics.

Not that Nicole should worry, although she is better known for the raunchier catalogue of The Pussycat Dolls which sold them more than 50 million records, she's been singing in musicals since her teens.

'Theatre has always been such a great passion of mine and I am thrilled to be making my West End debut in such an iconic show,' said Nicole.

'I couldn't be more excited. It is a dream come true and I'm truly honoured to have been asked to take part in what I know will be a very special time in my career.'

Cats, created by Lloyd Webber and director Trevor Nunn from the rhymes of T.S. Eliot, originally ran in London for 21 years, 18 years on Broadway and has been performed around the world in 20 languages. 'I've come to the conclusion that T.S. Eliot was the inventor of rap,' said Lord Lloyd Webber, 'Nobody other than Eliot would have written "the Rum Tum Tugger is a curious cat". Today Rum Tum Tugger should be a street cat and that gives us a great dance opportunity'.

Although the new edition of Cats will run at the Palladium for just 12 weeks, other opportunities from the show could yet knock for Nicole Scherzinger – and maybe take her Hollywood-bound.

'There is considerable talk at last about Cats being made into a movie,' Lord Lloyd Webber revealed, 'This second life of Cats gives me the chance to think on how that can happen.'

More than 73 million people have seen Cats. To join them, book at london.catsthemusical.com or call the box office on 0844 874 0667. Tickets are from £20.

■ **PUSSY CAT CAT: Nicole Scherzinger as Grizabella**

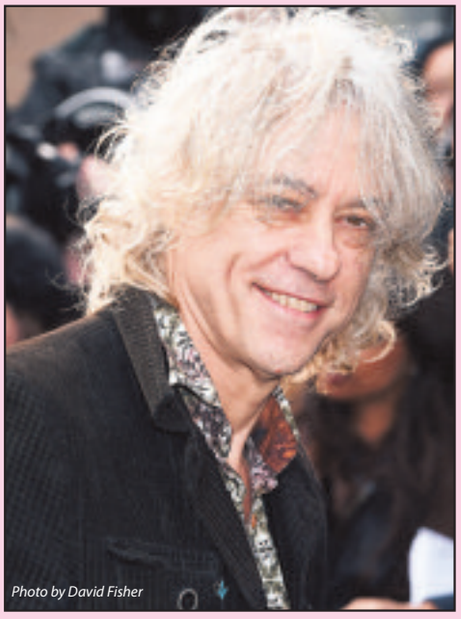


Photo by David Fisher

Buy it now says Sir Bob

CHELSEA resident Bob Geldof has called on every home in London to buy the Band Aid 30 single 'Do They Know It's Christmas' as their life-saving gift to the world.

The CD single will be released onDecember 8 costing £4. An iTunes download of the track – costing 99p – has already raised millions for the star-studded rock band relief campaign to fight Ebola.

The song, re-recorded at Notting Hill's Sarm Studios 30 years after the first Band Aid anthem was released to fight famine in Africa, features One Direction, Chris Martin, Bono, Rita Ore, Ed Sheeran, Sam Smith, Elbow, Seal, Jessie Ware and a huge-hearted choir of other top stars.

Bob Geldof said: 'Every home in London should own this single. Buy this track, buy five, buy ten, it's a great track. Buy it, play it, sing it. Help West Africa and help heal the world, let them know it's Christmastime again.'

He added: 'Ebola is the most anti-human disease, but we can stop it and we will stop it.

'This thing is just a flight away from us. In West Africa now they need medical staff and medicines and then they think they can contain it. Every Londoner can help them do this, it's the Christmas gift we all have to buy.'

Sir Bob re-launched the Band Aid project earlier this month after he was shaken and moved by watching a French TV report that rammed home the human misery of the spread of the disease.

He said: 'What struck home for me was the anti-human nature of this virus, that you can't touch another person, mothers and fathers can't give that last bit of comfort to their children – and that could be British mums and dads.

'I saw on TV a five-year-old little girl, very bewildered, about to die, her mother in agony because she couldn't touch her, the child bewildered as to why her mother couldn't hold her.

'And an African nurse, all in her plastic spacesuit but without her gloves on, being human, forgetting where she was and what it was, she reached out and wiped away a tear on the kid. Of course, the child died and the nurse died too. That did it for me, it was 1984 all over again.'

Donations to Band Aid 30 can also be made by text. Text AID to 70060 for a £5 donation.

Photo by Betetta/Sims

Photo by David Fisher

■ **BOB Geldof, Harry Styles and Rita Ora arrive to record Band Aid 30**

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Dreams

Because your sleep matters

New show for world's leading wildlife artist

DAVID Shepherd CBE, the world's leading wildlife artist, is to crown his 55-year career with a new one-man exhibition at the Rountree Tryon Galleries, which opens in the West End on Wednesday.

The exhibition at the Bury Street galleries will run from December 3rd to 23rd and will feature new work, sketches and previously-unseen oil paintings from the private collection of the national treasure who became internationally-acclaimed after he was rejected by a London art school, who advised him to drive a bus instead.

The 83-year-old Hendon-born artist is returning to the galleries where he first exhibited in 1960 with a one-man show which sold out in 20 minutes.

Shepherd showed early promise as an artist when, at the age of eight, he won a children's painting competition run by Nursery World magazine. But on leaving school at Stowe he went to Kenya with the ambition of becoming a game warden.

> There will be a good mixture of new work, sketches and paintings from my private collection

"I knocked on the door of the head game warden in Nairobi but I was told that I wasn't wanted. That was the end of that career in three seconds flat," he said.

He took a job as a receptionist at a Kenyan hotel and supplemented his £1-a-week wages by selling his paintings of local birdlife at £10 a time in order to afford his passage home.

"When I returned to London I was penniless and I had two choices, to become an artist or a bus driver. My father encouraged me to turn to art and I applied to the Slade School of Fine Art, who took one look at my work and told me to go away and drive a bus."'

However, he was taken in and trained by the Chelsea portrait artist Robin Goodwin, who mentored Shepherd for three years at the former Tite Street studio of Augustus John.

"I owe all my success to Robin,' said Shepherd, who rose in the Sixties to world fame for his paintings of aviation, steam locomotives and, principally, African wildlife.

"I am excited about this exhibition," said Mr Shepherd, "I have been painting frantically for much of this year and so there will be a good mixture of new work, sketches and paintings from my private collection."

David Shepherd also became renowned as a passionate conservationist and founder of the wildlife charity the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, whose supporters include Dame Judi Dench, Ricky Gervais, Stephen Fry, Gary Linekar, David Gower and Melanie C.

A contribution from the sale of two pieces at the Rountree Tryon exhibition will go to the Foundation, which over 30 years has donated more than £7 million to help save endangered animals.

For details of the David Shepherd exhibition, go to www.rountreetryon.com

● The Wildlife Foundation is offering new artists the springboard opportunity of a £10,000 top prize in its wildlife artist of the year competition. The competition, now in its eighth year, is open to artists from 17 to 60+. The closing date for entries is February 15th 2015 and all details are available at www.davidshepherd.org/way

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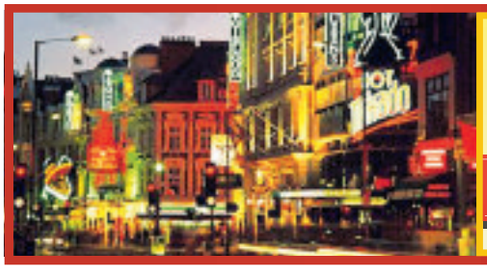
The winning design from this year's Portobello and Golborne Markets Christmas card competition, by Yara, 11, from St Barnabas & St Philip's CE Primary School.

Christmas Crackers

From fruit and veg to fashion and from antiques to international street food – uncover some real gems at Portobello and Golborne Markets this Christmas.

www.rbkc.gov.uk/ourmarkets

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA



TALK OF THE TOWN

MUSIC ★ THEATRE ★ PUBS

The entertainment scene in West London

Following in steps of the Fab Four

MEET the Sixties-style songwriting sisters tipped for the top in 2015 for sounding just like Lennon & McCartney would have done if John and Paul had been girls.

Up and coming on the London music scene

Following in the Fab Four's footsteps, The MonaLisa Twins are breaking to fame from London via Liverpool, where the pop pair were discovered in The Beatles' former launch-pad, The Cavern Club.

After a four-month warm-up at The Cavern that packed out the club on every Saturday night, the newly-Chelsea-based twins are preparing for their London debut with a launch show at The Half Moon in Putney on January 22nd.

The 20-year-old twins, Mona and Lisa Wagner, are originally from Austria and started writing songs together when they were 12. At 16 they turned professional and performed in Europe, the USA and Australia.

Now their very-Beatley songs, with Sixties-sounding guitars and John and Paul-style harmonies, have caught the attention of rock Tsar Mark Cooper, Head of Music TV at the BBC, who suggested the move to showcase in London after seeing their large collection of self-made videos on YouTube, which have totalled more than four million hits.

"We have always loved the mindset and sound of the Sixties,' said Mona, 'But we're not a nostalgia band or are trying to be retro, we simply believe that something great started in that era which is worthy of being continued 50 years on.

"We're very excited about our first show in West London and that people in the business keep telling us that we're going to make it."

"They are incredible,' said BBC Radio 2 DJ Johnnie Walker, whose enthusiasm has been echoed by various stars of the Sixties.

"I love this act, is there a fan club?' said Peter Noone of Herman's Hermits. John Sebastian of The Lovin' Spoonful added 'they are fabulous, I would seriously enjoy playing on their next project' and Woodstock star Melanie Safka, who topped the charts with 'Brand New Key' and 'Ruby Tuesday', enthused, 'wow, their guitar work is wonderful and their harmonies are beautiful, I would love to hear them cover one of my songs."

The MonaLisa Twins showcase at The Half Moon will launch their new album 'When We Are Together'.

For more information: www.monalisatwins.com

❍ **Do YOU know a band that's Up & Coming and tipped for success in 2015? Send us your suggestions to editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk**

■ **THE MONA LISARWINS: Preparing for their first London gig at The Half Moon in Putney in January**

The best bar none

■ **TOP BAR: Bodo's Schloss general manager Ronald Holmberg and staff member recives their Best Bar None award from the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Councillor Maigread Condon-Simmonds**

■ **THIS year's Best Bar None winner is Bodo's Schloss on Kensington High Street. The Austrian themed bar was presented with the 'Overall Winner' for 2014 at therecent awards ceremony in a packed Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington.**

Beating off stiff competition to the overall title, in what continues to be one of the largest Best Bar None competitions in the country, it was also named 'Best Nightclub/Bar'. Bodo's Schloss took part for the first time last year finishing as runner-up in the Nightclub category. Councillor Tim Ahern, Cabinet Member for Environment, said: "Firstly I would like to say congratulations to Bodo's Schloss on its victory, particularly impressive as it is only its second year in the competition.

"The Council and Diageo UK have worked hard with licensed premises across the borough to make Kensington and Chelsea's Best Bar None scheme amongst the best in the country and I would like to thank all those who took part this year.

"It's important for businesses to show their commitment to high standards and accreditation through Best Bar None is an excellent demonstration of this."

Also at the awards was Mark Baird, Head of Alcohol in Society for Diageo, who added: "We are delighted to continue our long relationship with the Royal Borough's Best Bar None scheme and send our congratulations to Bodo's Schloss and all the other winners who are a credit to our industry"

A further 36 pubs, bars and clubs across the borough gained membership of the scheme, with the winners as follows:

Pub Category: Winner - O'Neills, Earl's Court Road ; 1st runner up – Builders Arms, Kensington Court Place; 2nd runner up – the Hour Glass, Brompton Road.

Nightclub/Bar Category: Winner – Boujis, Kensington High Street; 1st runner up – 606 Club, Lots Road ; 2nd Runner up – Notting Hill Arts Club, Notting Hill Gate.

Best Bar None in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is sponsored by Diageo GB and the Royal Garden Hotel with support from various partner agencies.

To find out more about the scheme, and current members, go to www.rbkc.gov.uk/bestbarnone or call 020 7341 5708

Pubs in West London

Win ice thrills where Harry Styles skates

ICE is nice if you go in one direction and now you can win a session at Harry Styles' favourite rink, the Natural History Museum Ice Rink which is now celebrating its 10th year of getting Kensington to get its skates on.

The rink, pictured above, where One Direction filmed his new video offers a festive haven within the beautiful surroundings of the Natural History Museum, one of Britain's most popular visitor attractions. Beneath almost 80,000 twinkling fairy lights and surrounding a glittering 40ft Christmas tree, beginners and advanced skaters can enjoy the 1,000 square metre rink.

Alongside the cosy café bar and balcony, where visitors can snuggle up on sofas and enjoy an array of festival treats, will be the interactive Lindt Bear and Friends Chalet to offer a special experience to visitors.

Partnering with the Ice Rink this year, Lindt will be bringing to life the iconic Lindt Bear, Santa and Gold Reindeer, to delight the young and the young at heart, with complimentary Lindor truffles to sample and a variety of festive activities to capture Christmas moments. Visitors to the chalet will be in with a chance of winning weekly prizes.

The rink's official partners, Sony, will also be on hand to help visitors capture those special seasonal moments with loved ones on the new flagship Xperia Z3 series. Guests need never miss a moment, as the fully waterproof smartphones and tablet are perfect for handling snow and ice, Guests will be invited to enjoy the Xperia chalet where their photos will be taken on the smartphones' 20.7 megapixel camera, which snaps pictures even in the lowest light conditions.

The Ice Rink will also be offering extended sessions where all can take to the ice for longer skating periods. These extended sessions will run Monday – Friday, 10am to 1:40 pm until December 12th. Customers can purchase a ticket at any point during these times.

To book the skating experience of the winter season at the Natural History Museum Ice Rink, visit www.nhmskating.com or telephone: 0844 8471576. For group bookings including schools call 0844 8471575. The Ice Rink is also partnering with the London Marriott Hotel Kensington to offer a range of festive hotel packages. Visit the website for more details: www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/lonlm-london-marriott-hotel-kensington/

■ HARRY ON ICE: The One Direction star filming his latest video at the ice rink

WIN SKATING TICKETS

FOR the chance to win a pair of tickets to go skating at the Natural History Museum Ice Rink, correctly answer the following:

Q: On which TV show did One Direction first find fame?
[A] Opportunity Knocks
[B] Family Fortunes
[C] The X Factor

Email your answers to: competitions@londonweeklynews.co.uk The reader with the first correct answer pulled from a hat will win a pair of tickets.

Join in with the 34th Great Christmas Pudding Race

ACCORDING to the British Dietetic Association, on average we will each consume more than 6,000 calories on Christmas Day.

That's the equivalent of all the meals of a normal Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in one day.

It gets worse. Not only will we gorge like there's no tomorrow on the day itself; over the festive period we will eat at least 500 calories more than usual per day and by New Year's Day, on average, we can expect to have put on 5lbs.

It gets worse still. The dieticians estimate that it takes more than three months to lose the Christmas weight. So even if you diet like mad, you should not expect to see your pre-Christmas self in the mirror this side of April.

But cheer up, for help is at hand in the form of the 34th Great Christmas Pudding Race taking place on December 6th at Covent Garden.

If you take part in the Pudding Race you could lose 5lbs before Christmas and then everything equals out, it's all gain and no pain.

For the reasonably fit, the Pudding Race is the most fun you can have wearing a Christmas outfit and it's all in aid of Cancer Research UK and organised by CRAC.

So, log onto www.xmaspuddingrace.org.uk, and register a team of six people to compete.

A fun day out is guaranteed with entertainment, guest celebrities and the chance for you and your company team to receive full media coverage.

If you can't face taking part just go along to support the racers and donate to a worthy cause – the fun starts at 11am.

Last year they raised £21,000 - help to beat that number this year!

CANCER RESEARCH UK

WINE & DINE

The food and drink page for West London

All in the best possible taste

by Geoff Baker

THE food bible Restaurant magazine got it right, 'Mark Hix is Britain's coolest restaurateur.'

It's the best of praise that. Various superlatives label others among the very successful; 'richest', 'most-famous', 'iconic', 'treasure' - but 'coolest' is the label that others all hanker after.

And of course by doing so, they identify themselves as being very uncool indeed.

But Hix has become cool by never hankering after any artifice, least of all fame, public image or the television exposure that has made stars of loud-mouths and clods; for him as a chef it has always only been about the meal.

Down in Dorset, where he hails from, they sussed this out a while ago. 'If cooking is the new rock and roll, then Mark Hix is its Keith Richards', noted one publication in Lyme Regis where the laconic chef and food writer owns Hix Oyster & Fish House and is affectionately regarded as a local hero for the jobs and publicity which he has created for the tiny town.

It's an acute comparison; Mark and Keith alike are yardsticks of taste; nothing tacky or crass has ever been associated with either of them in their shared lifelong pursuits to master the complexity of simplicity.

'Mark's thing is very simple, it's to give people what they want and then to give them what they didn't know they wanted,' said a friend just before the great man arrived in a beautiful bespoke suit and his hallmark five o'-clock shadow for lunch at Hixter Bankside, the latest and packed-out restaurant in an empire that has his name on or associated with some of the very best places to eat in Britain.

As we all dug in to Hix's bubble 'n squeak with a fried double yolker which the first delicious mouthful revealed that I wanted very much, I considered the empire which has grown for the Dorset lad who started off at the Hilton, 'where I was in charge of heating up the peas'.

There's Hixter Bankside in what was once a metal box factory and now, through his quiet patronage of the arts, has so many masterpieces hanging that it looks like a ante-room at The Tate; there's Hixter City, the handsome dining room and all-weather terrace in an old East India Company warehouse; there's the Tramshed with its especially-commissioned Damien Hirst artwork and, downstairs, The Cock 'n Bull Gallery space of sculpture and paintings ; there's Hix Soho, elegant with its wood panelling and polished mirrors and there's Hix Oyster and Chophouse, the former sausage factory in the heart of Smithfield, his first own-name restaurant which he opened in Farringdon in 2008, stamping on it the taste that is his signature by retaining the original features of wooden floors, tiled walls and marble bar.

MARK Hix

Just now all of the above are busily taking bookings for private parties and Christmas bashes from the chic and in-the-know who want to celebrate the end of year by dining where the scene is very truly at.

But that's just the half of it for the former Weymouth College student who rose to become chief director of Caprice Holdings and oversaw all of the restaurants, menus and events in the Caprice Group which included The Ivy. For there's also Hix Mayfair, where he has a consultancy at the Rocco Forte luxury Brown's hotel, and Hix in Selfridge's, where the 'Hix Cure' smoked salmon is reckoned to be the very finest on the planet.

And there's more – Hix Outside, a new catering company which brings Hix's signature British dishes to private, corporate, sports and charity events, the Hix Oyster & Fish House in seaside Lyme, and 'Hixstock', not a cube to rival another chef's Knorr enterprise but the much cooler annual rock festival for amateur guitarists which Mark got going on the beach in Lyme to accompany his Food Rocks festival of food and at which this year they set a UK record of more than 3,000 guitarists performing 'Smoke On The Water' with Ian Gillan, including the maestro-chef himself typically not on the stage but strumming along in the huge crowd with the ordinary people.

But perhaps the proudest venture for the boy-done-good is the Hix Academy he has established at his old Weymouth College, a project dedicated to discovering and developing the finest young chefs, restaurant staff and bartenders and where apprentice Hixters study and learn their skills running a fully-commercial restaurant and where the man himself attends every fortnight to teach, pass it on and give something back.

Whatever next for London's busiest chef? He grinned.

'Do you want to see the proofs of my latest, Hix Magazine?' he said as passed across print-outs of a new glossy lifestyle magazine for which the writers include his close friend Tracey Emin.

'Check out the pix on the centre pages, our take on the old Seventies book Rude Food.'

Rude? Possibly; but, like all Hix meals, eminently in the best possible taste

MARK HIX'S RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Spring Bubble and Squeak

From Mark Hix The Collection, published by Quadrille Publishing

Serves 4
125-150g cooked and peeled new potatoes
200g spring greens, cooked and drained
6 spring onions, trimmed
100g podded broad beans, cooked
100g podded peas, cooked
1 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tbsp vegetable oil

Chop the potatoes, greens, spring onions and beans and place in a bowl with the peas. Add the parsley, mix well and season with salt and pepper to taste.

Shape the mixture into 4 even-sized patties and flatten them slightly.

Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan and cook the patties for 3-4 minutes on each side until golden. Drain on kitchen paper and serve straight away, or keep warm in a low oven whilst frying an egg to serve on top.

Here's your chance to WIN a superb lunch or dinner for two at either of Mark Hix's latest restaurants, Hixter Bankside or Hixter City.

Simply correctly answer the following question and email it to competitions@londonweeklynews.co.uk by Thursday, December 18th.

Q – WHAT IS A PESCETARIAN?

1. **Someone who only eats peas.**
2. **Someone who only eats pests.**
3. **A vegetarian who also eats fish.**

Normal competition rules apply. The winner will be notified by email after the closing date of December 18th 2014

What do you call a marshmallow that's also a truffle - a muffle of course!

ANGES de Sucre, a bijou boutique on Holland Street in the heart of Kensington, is launching its own original gourmet creation, a delightful marshmallow and chocolate truffle hybrid - the first ever Muffle.

Each individually hand-crafted Muffle features a smooth Belgian white, milk or dark chocolate shell, embellished with crushed nuts or cookies and filled with a freshly-whipped, light and airy marshmallow with a secret soft gooey core of rich chocolate ganache. The Muffles are fun, frivolous and delicious treats with a smooth domed almost-planetary appearance and contrasting inner layers – launched just in time for Christmas.

Anges de Sucre's Original Super Muffles, inspired by some of the world's most iconic women, come in three delicious inaugural flavours:

- Super Muffle Cindy: Smooth Belgian milk chocolate shells encrusted with crushed caramelised speculoos 'biscoff' cookies, encasing a pillow-soft organic vanilla bean pod marshmallow and a soft and silken hidden core of dark chocolate ganache.
- Super Muffle Heidi: Creamy Belgian white and milk chocolate marbled shells rolled in roasted crushed peanuts and filled with plump organic vanilla bean pod mallow fluff and a gooey sea-salted caramel surprise finish.
- Super Muffle Naomi: Rich 70 per cent Belgian chocolate shells and crushed hazelnuts enrobing a fresh and fluffy marshmallow with banana puree and a smooth creamy blend of Nutella and chocolate.

Anges de Sucre's founder, Reshmi Bennett, said: "After months of testing the concept that draws inspiration from many of my old favourites - tea cakes, s'mores, and chocolate truffles, I am very excited to be sharing our very own Anges de Sucre invention.

"They are a perfect balance of textures – a smooth chocolate exterior with a bold crunchy bite, light and airy mallow filling and a soft gooey surprise finish rounding it off, which makes then an incredibly gratifying treat!"

Released just in time for the party season, The Three Original Super Muffles will make a unique gift for the gourmet treat aficionado and also a truly indulgent addition to a warming cup of molten hot chocolate.

A bag of thee assorted Muffles, (1 of each flavour), is priced at £5.50.

Exclusively available at the Kensington store, and online for delivery nationwide via the website www.angesdesucre.com

Anges de Sucre was founded by Londoner Reshmi Bennett, who trained in classical French cuisine in Paris at Ecole Gregoire Ferrandi. Born and raised in Kuwait with Indian parents, Reshmi has also lived in Paris and London, and was inspired by her global background to create a unique taste experience, reflecting in her macarons, marshmallows and now muffles.

■ MUFFLES available at Ange de Sucre, Holland Street, Kensington or online at www.angesdesucre.com

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Email your sports news and pictures to Tony McDonald at sport@londonweeklynews.co.uk

LONDON WEEKLY NEWS sport

Hammersmith and Fulham skipper James Smart holding the Middlesex Cup aloft.

Hammering on

HAMMERSMITH and Fulham RFC made it four wins in a row with a tight 18-13 victory at Hampstead on Saturday.

Hammers sped out of the blocks with some fine running rugby in the first quarter to carve out a 12-point lead.

Winger James Lo followed up his own initial line break to dot down in the corner, while his back three partner Tony Bryant crossed the white wash just 10 minutes later to take a commanding lead into the second-half.

Hampstead hit back with some hard running after the interval to take a swift brace of tries, before the unerring boot of full-back Neil McClure extended Hammers' advantage.

Desperate defence in the final 10 minutes saw the visitors hold on to secure a gritty away victory.

Hammersmith and Fulham sit third in London 2 North West after a strong start to the season which saw them claim the Middlesex Cup in a thrilling 17-13 win over the Civil Service.

Based at Hurlingham Park in the heart of Fulham, the club's top three sides train on Tuesday and Thursday from 7.30pm. Sessions are always open to new players.

Hammers also field two social sides and a huge youth section, making them one of the biggest clubs in London.

For more information visit **www.fulhamrugby.co.uk**

HAMMERS NAILED IT: The triumphant Hammersmith and Fulham rugby squad and coaching staff after their impressive recent victory over the Civil Service in the Middlesex Cup Final.

IF you dream of becoming an Olympic athlete or simply want to maintain a healthy level of fitness and make new friends at the same time, there are plenty of opportunities to do so thanks to two local non-commercial and friendly running clubs.

Members of the informal Chelsea Running Club run from Chelsea Fire Station at 264 King's Road, SW3 5UF every Monday and Wednesday from 7.15pm.

Founder members of the club have competed in races ranging from 5k to marathons, although they cater for all abilities.

"We just request that you are comfortable running three miles in 37 minutes. That's a nice, easy, steady jogging pace," says a statement on the Chelsea Runners' website (www.chelsearunningclub.co.uk).

If you fancy running by the river, then you might like to join Fulham Running Club. Members meet every Wednesday at 6.45pm at the corner of Bishops Park and Fulham FC's Craven Cottage ground.

"All paces, ages and abilities are very welcome," says Fulham secretary Charles Craven."We have had a great year as a club, celebrating our 10th anniversary and continuing to grow. We are on the verge of our 500th Facebook member, which isn't too bad for a community running club."

There are no costs or fees to run with either the Fulham or Chelsea group – just turn up and join in!

CHELSEA FC youngsters extended their lead at the top of the Barclays Premier League U18 South table by two points over Leicester City thanks to a 3-0 home win against sixth-placed Arsenal at Cobham last Friday.

Dominic Solanke scored after eight minutes before Tammy Abraham added a second – his 18th of the season – midway through the first half. Solanke, whose late brace secured Chelsea a thrilling 7-6 aggregate FA Youth Cup Final victory over Fulham last May, sealed this win with a neat finish from close range on 70 minutes.

The U18s begin the defence of the FA Youth Cup when they visit Leeds United for a third round tie next Tuesday. Blues will fancy their chances at Elland Road against a Leeds side currently struggling third from bottom of their league, having lost four and drawn one of their last five.

FOOTBALL FIXTURES

Friday, November 28
Southampton U18 v **CHELSEA U18**, 12.00.
Saturday, November 29
Brighton & H.A. v **FULHAM** (Sky Bet Championship), 3.00.
Sunderland v **CHELSEA** (Barclays Premier League), 5.30.
FULHAM U18 v Leicester City U18, 11.30.
Monday, December 1
FULHAM U21 v Norwich City U21, 7.00.
Tuesday, December 2
Leeds Utd U18 v **CHELSEA U18** (FA Youth Cup 3R), 7.05.

Chelsea Ladies in Wembley history match

TWO members of Chelsea FC Ladies team that finished runners-up to Liverpool in this season's FA Women's Super League played for England in Sunday's 3-0 defeat by Germany at Wembley, watched by a record crowd of 45,619.

In a historic friendly shown live on BBC2, the first time England's women had played at the new national stadium, Eniola Aluko played as the lone striker until she was substituted in the 62nd minute, while defender Laura Bassett had to wait until stoppage time before coming off the bench. A third Chelsea star, Claire Rafferty, was an unused sub.

So far so good for So-Yun

CHELSEA Ladies' playmaker Ji So-Yun was recently voted the Women's Super League 1 Players' Player of the Year at the 2014 FA Women's Football Awards. The 23-year-old South Korean scored nine goals in 19 games last season.

Chelsea only missed out on the WSL title to Liverpool on goal difference after the teams tied on 26 points but at least second spot ensured they qualify for next season's Champions League.

Phil 'The Power' gears up for another world championship

HE is a 16-time world champion, a man credited with redefining the sport of darts, and has just released a second auto biographical work; despite be ing widely regarded as the greatest darts player of all time, Phil 'The Power' Taylor remains a working man's sportsman.

A DECADE since the release of his autobiography, Taylor's second literary outing focuses on a calendar year which has brought the 54-year-old heartbreak and triumph in equal measure, as well as challenging common misconceptions around the sport itself.

The idea for a second book came about when Taylor was contacted by sports journalist and darts fanatic Mike Walters: "Mike asked me a couple of years ago if I'd be interested in doing another book.

He'd got this idea, I said why not," he explains. On the snapshot format of the book, Taylor explains:"People think darts players just nip down the pub for half an hour and have a practice, then play a tournament. It's not like that at all, so Mike wanted to put over exactly what a year is like in somebody's life as a pro." He admits the process was less gruelling than writing his autobiography with Sid Waddell in 2004. "The last one was my life so you've got to try and remember a lot more.

Mike is at the dart tournaments, he's a journalist so he knows all the results and fixtures and he's around the back room a lot. It's been quite easy, this one has."

Despite twice being nominated for BBC Sports Personality of the Year, Taylor has come away empty handed on both occasions; something he attributes to outdated perceptions of darts: "We don't get that recognition, do we? We'll always have that element of snobbery toward us, always classed as a second act. A second class sport.

"Despite this, he admits the sport has come a long way during his 25 year career at the top, thanks in no small part to an old friend. "Barry Hearn never stops working, getting more and more sponsorship, putting the prize money up. When anybody starts winning massive prize money, you're going to start taking notice," Taylor says with a smile.

He believes an updated presentation of darts has also helped its rejuvenation. "Sky gave it much more razzmatazz, which got more children wanting to watch it. I mean, our average viewer's age now is about 16-25!" A far cry from the game played in dimly lit pubs of yesteryear.

On a personal level, Taylor is gearing up for the World Championships, which begin on December 17thtake place at one of darts' spiritual homes, London's Alexandra Palace. "I'd love to win another title. I think one more will do it, and if I win that one, I'll probably try for one more," he laughs, revealing his hopes for the tournament. It is testament to Taylor's continued appetite for success 25 years and 16 titles later that he is considered among the front runners this time around; "It's just the way I am.

It's the way my parents brought me up. While you're out there working, you try your best, and you think about other people as well," he says, referring to his children, who now work as part of his team.

Taylor admits it will be a tall order to compete wi th the likes of Adrian Lewis, the man with whom he contested what many consider to be the best game of darts ever played. "The Premier League final against James Wade, when I had the two nine-darters is probably my second best game. But that one, to me, is the best game ever." He marks other profe ssionals out for praise when discussing his title rivals this year: "James Wade, Michael van Gerwen, I think Robert Thornton's playing out of his skin at the minute. They're all good players now to be hone st with you. If you're not on song, or if you're average, you're going to get beat."

Having retired and un-retired once in 2004, Taylor admits he has no designs on leaving the oche just yet, despite a tempting offer from his beloved Port Vale Football Club. "They've asked me to be on the board, which I wouldn't have time for now, but I would consider in the future. I'd be very motivated towards them and also very truthful as well. They'd have to do better, that's for sure!" If he last quarter century is anything to go by, the Phil Taylor success story is far from finished just yet.

◆ **Staying Power by Phil Taylor is available now through Hodder & Stoughton**

BULLSEYE: Phil "The Power" Taylor in action. Photo by Lawrence Lustig

London Weekly News

SPORT

Thursday, November 27th 2014 ● SPORTS DESK: 07711 169 427

Eden Hazard: best in the Premier League according to Tony Gale. Pic: Rob Newell/Digital South

Chelsea 'will win it in style'

PIMLICO-raised Sky Sports TV commentator and boyhood Chelsea fan Tony Gale is convinced the Blues will be crowned champions again this season.

● By LWN reporter **Tony McDonald**
sport@londonweeklynews.co.uk

Saturday's comfortable 2-0 home victory against West Bromwich Albion – their sixth consecutive win at Stamford Bridge – saw Jose Mourinho's table-toppers extend their unbeaten Barclays Premier League start to a new club record 12 games – or 17 in all competitions, which is another feat to add to the Stamford Bridge history books.

Former centre-back Gale, who pocketed a PL winner's medal with Blackburn Rovers in 1995, confidently believes the championship trophy will end up back in SW6 for the fifth time next May.

"Chelsea were my tip and there is no doubt that they will win the Premier League again this season," he exclusively told LWN Sport.

"Not only will they lift the title, they will win it in style, playing good football."

However, Gale does not expect the west London high fliers to emulate Arsenal's 'Invincibles' of 2003-04 by remaining unbeaten throughout the league campaign.

"This is a more enterprising Chelsea team in Mourinho's second spell in charge but they do give their opponents a chance, so that may prove their undoing once or twice along the way," added Gale.

"I'm lucky to have commentated on Chelsea games live for Sky about eight or nine times already this season and I love watching them.

"Cesc Fabregas has been terrific and made the difference. Eden Hazard is, for me, the best player in the Premier League this season. The three in front of Fabregas and Nemanja Matic – Hazard, Willian and Oscar – are so fluid and then you've got the goalscorer they never had last season in Diego Costa."

First half goals by Costa, his 11th of the season, and Hazard put Chelsea in cruise control against a West Brom team reduced to 10 when Claudio Yacob was sent off in the 29th minute for a two-footed lunge on Costa. Heroic WBA keeper Ben Foster prevented an avalanche as Chelsea turned the screw before easing off the gas in the second-half, with all three points safely in the bag.

Should Blues take maximum points from this Saturday evening's live TV game at Sunderland, they will match Manchester City's (2011-12) best ever PL start of 35 points from 13 matches. How The Bridge faithful would dearly love to see their heroes set a new top flight record when Spurs visit next Wednesday.

Of the most realistic challengers to Chelsea's dominance, Gale does not think Man City are equipped for another title success this season. "There are too many internal problems and egos for them to win it.

"In Mourinho, Chelsea have the best manager in the PL. He's not frightened to make big decisions, or change tactics during a game, and he's got the total respect of his players. He is the biggest star at the club – bigger than all of his players – and that goes a long, long way. I've seen behind the scenes, too, how he has the full respect of his staff.

"It's not just the summer signing of Costa and Fabregas that has made all the difference, though. Goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois has brought a freshness to the team and is enjoying a food start to his PL career, while Filipe Luis has been a good addition to the squad too."

Gale agrees that in John Terry and Gary Cahill, Blues can boast the strongest central defensive pairing in the PL. "But they are helped by having the best defensive midfielder in the country in front of them in Matic," he added.

Although Gale played most of his 594 career league games for West Ham United, he remains very much in touch with his west London roots.

Born at the former Westminster Hospital 59 years ago last week, he supported Chelsea as a kid growing up on the Churchill Gardens Estate, where his mother Valerie still lives today in Lupus Road.

"My parents moved there from Page Street, where they had lived when I was born.

"My era as a fan was the 1970 FA Cup-winning side – Peter Osgood and Alan Hudson were my biggest favourites, being two of the most skilful players in the country in what was generally a very skilful Chelsea team.

"My dad (Peter) and uncle Jimmy had season tickets in the North Stand and they used to 'bunk' me and my cousin Steven in! We subsequently moved to the East Stand enclosure, where we sat on the wall, before upgrading to the West Stand.

"I remember the old Westminster & Pimlico News was the first paper to mention my name in print," says Tony, who played schools football for Churchill Gardens Primary and Pimlico secondary before progressing to West London, Middlesex Boys, Inner London and London representative teams.

His days supporting the Blues were curtailed when he left Pimlico school and signed for Fulham in 1976, making his first team debut the following year. He made 277 league appearances for the Whites before his £200,000 transfer to West Ham 30 years ago and is pleased to see the club he served until 1984 turning things around after an awful start to the season under former manager Felix Magath.

"Kit Symons should have been given the job in the first place, because the decision to appoint Magath was one of the craziest I've ever seen in football. He has probably put Fulham back a couple of years.

"It is going to take Kit quite some time to get Fulham back where they were – a lot of good players have left and there are new, younger ones coming through – and I think it's expecting too much of them to do better than finish mid-table this season. The fans shouldn't expect miracles from Kit. It's a case of him steadying the ship," says Gale.

Tony Gale (left) has both Fulham and Chelsea in his blood.

This week at STAMFORD BRIDGE

Focus on Craven Cottage

Whites undone by Bees' sting

FULHAM visit Brighton on Saturday eager to learn from the costly mistakes that ended their recent respectable run at near neighbours Brentford last Friday.

"We need to improve, it's as simple as that," groaned Whites' Ross McCormack after the 2-1 defeat – their first in seven matches under Kit Symons which had produced 18 points from the previous 10 games.

It looked as though the Whites would extend that improving run when Hugo Rodallega side-footed home from 12 yards following McCormack's square pass to give Fulham an undeserved 51st minute lead

After Fulham failed to deal with a low cross from the left, Harlee Dean drove an unstoppable rising shot past brilliant Fulham keeper Marcus Bettinelli in the 81st minute, before substitute Jota snatched the winner in the first minute of time added on with a low shot that went in courtesy of a wicked deflection off Dan Burn.

Although Brentford dominated for large periods of this lively west London derby, forcing four quality saves from the impressive Bettinelli, luck deserted Fulham in the dying minutes.

Aside from Bees' fortunate winner, TV replays clearly showed that they were denied a stonewall penalty in stoppage time when Lasse Vigen Christensen was blatantly knocked to the ground deep in the Brentford box by Bees' centre-half Tony Craig.

Man of the Match McCormack made no excuses, however, saying: "They were the better team – absolutely no doubt about it. They thoroughly deserved their win.

"When you're away from home and it's one each in stoppage time, it's a case of taking a point and going home. It was sloppiness.

"We had a two on one on the left-hand side but allowed the boy Jota to cut inside on his stronger left foot."

Manager Symons admitted: "I thought we were poor in the first half but we weathered the storm. Both goals were sort of out of nothing and preventable but we need to do better in those situations. It's game management."

Symons, his players and Fulham fans shouldn't be downcast for long, though. As the manager points out: "We are a work in progress and it takes time. That was the end of a really good unbeaten run. Now let's go on another one."

Brighton sit three places and one point below the Whites ahead of Saturday's game at The Amex.

FULHAM KIDS FIGHT BACK

FULHAM Under-18s twice came from behind to draw 2-2 at Brighton & Hove Albion on Saturday. Josh Walker and an own goal (following a cross-shot by Stephen Humphrys) earned Whites a share of the league points.

Sunday's scheduled Premier League Cup U21 game against Norwich City at Motspur Park was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch.

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